

Parallel Albinism in Two Theclines (Lycaenidae)

Stryomon melinus (Huebner) occasionally develops an aberration in which the normally orange-red "thecla spot" in cell Cu₂ on both surfaces of the hindwing is straw yellow. This aberration has been called *meinersi* Gunder, although such name, of course, has no taxonomic standing. I recently published a color illustration of a *meinersi* specimen (Holland, 1980[1981]. Aberrant New Mexican butterflies. J. Res. Lepid. 19(2):88-95).

A research request by Mr. Ted Pike of Fairview, Alberta, Canada, for *Harkenclenus titus* (Fab.) material caused me to photograph my New Mexican examples of this species. Much to my surprise, I discovered that the normally coral submarginal spots (including the *thecla* spot) were nearly pure white on one specimen. This albinis and a typical New Mexican *titus* specimen are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. *H. titus* males normally have no coral markings dorsally, and thus there is no way this aberration could find expression on that wing surface.

H. titus is not common in New Mexico, except in the northern tier of counties. During 93 days of collecting over 21 years in the Sacramento Mountains, it was encountered only once: at that time, 3♂♂ and 1♀ were taken including the illustrated aberration. These four specimens were found at the summit of 10,000' Nogal Peak. It is believed, due to the presence of both sexes, however, that specimens were not hilltopping to seek mates. Rather, I speculate that only a very tiny area around the summit was high enough to provide the requisite habitat for *H. titus* this far south in New Mexico. (There are no New Mexican records for *H. titus* either south or west of Nogal Peak.) If this assumption is correct, it is possible that the Nogal Peak colony of *H. titus* is very small, and may have a significant fraction of its individuals with a recessive allele producing this partial albinism.

Notably, the tip of the antenna club in the aberrant specimen is a normal coral color. In *meinersi* aberrations of *S. melinus*, the tip of the antenna club is also normally colored. An analogous allele may therefore produce the partial albinism in both theclines. Moreover, the antenna tip color, although normally the same as the coral *thecla* spot, is apparently controlled from a different set of genetic loci.

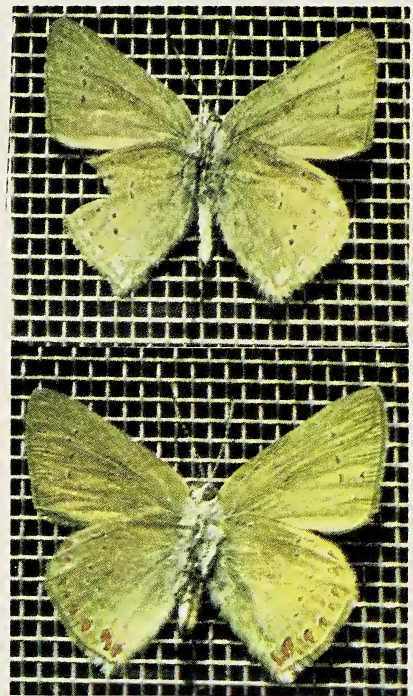


Fig. 1. *Harkenclenus titus* aberrant ♂, 9 Aug. 1975, Nogal Peak, Sacramento Mts., Lincoln Co., NM, 10,000' (3020 m), leg. R. Holland.

Fig. 2. *Harkenclenus titus* normal ♂. Same data as Fig. 1.